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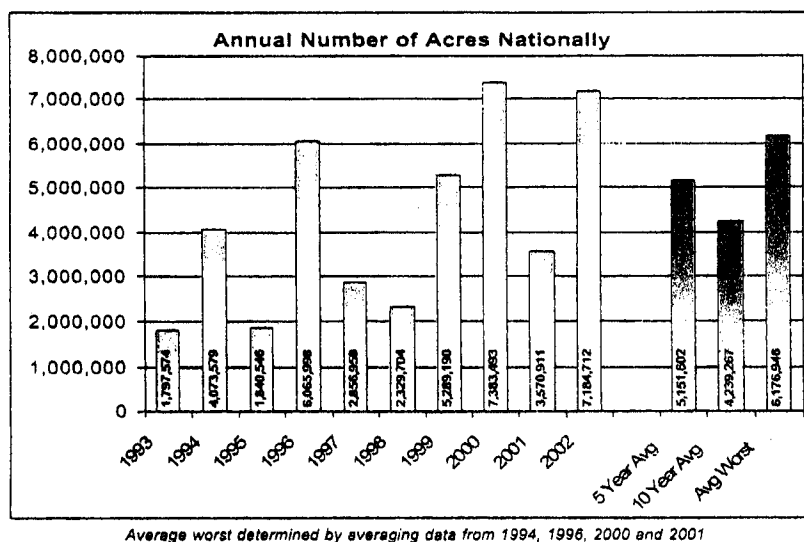
May 12, 2003

"If you cry FIRE in a forest, does anyone hear?"

There are plenty of *real* threats to our forests that have no relation to any logging practice. In fact, several are present due to the lack of Science Based Forest Management.

The 2002 fire season was one of the worst in modern history. More than 7.1 million acres burned last year – twice the annual 10-year average. These fires caused the death of 23 firefighters, drove tens of thousands of people from their homes, and destroyed more than 2,000 buildings. These fires also destroyed hundreds of millions of trees, devastated habitats, and severely damaged forest soils and watersheds for decades to come. America's public lands have undergone radical changes during the last century due to the suppression of fires and a lack of active forest and rangeland management. Our forests and rangelands have become unnaturally dense, and these unhealthy forests are vulnerable to severe wildfires. Currently, 190 million acres of public land and surrounding communities are at increased risk of catastrophic fires. Currently, process gridlock and litigation have prevented many projects designed to mitigate catastrophic wildfires from being implemented by *professional foresters*.

Acres Burned - NIFC



Millions of trees are lost to insects and disease; along with fire, these are the great threats to our forests. Scientific management and yes, at the proper time, harvesting, can save our forests!

Sincerely,

Charles H. Taylor
Member of Congress

FOREST FACTS #4 is the fourth in a series of letters concerning the health and status of our Nation's Forests.